

or even if they are charged with such, they may soon clear themselves from the imputation of guilt.

But to return to our story. They told their father, that the Lord of the country had commanded them, to bring Benjamin their brother down to him ; and that he promised to release Simeon, as soon as he saw their youngest brother. This was like a dagger to Jacob's heart, who loved Benjamin with an extraordinary affection ; and dreading the consequence of his leaving home, he absolutely refused to let him go. Reuben, who had two sons at home, and was concerned for the liberty of his brother Simeon, exclaimed, " Let him go with me ; and if I do not bring him back in safety to you, then kill my two sons, who shall be as hostages for him." We cannot but be astonished at these men, who could talk so deliberately of shedding blood.

However,

However, this could not prevail with Jacob, who would not consent to let Benjamin go ; and under this great affliction, he murmured against that gracious God, who had been his constant guide hitherto ; and said, " All these things are against me !"



C 3

CHAP.